

Lafayette Historical Society Newsletter

P.O. Box 133, Lafayette, California 94549

October, 1994

vol. XXI, No. 3

Marechal Duncan Honored As New President!

Bill Wakeman Appreciated As Past President

unanimous election

Officers of the Board:	President:	Marechal Duncan	283-6812
	Vice President:	Diddo Clark	906-0966
	Corresponding Secretary:	Ollie Hamlin	284-1446
	Recording Secretary:	Ruth Dyer	283-8312
	Treasurer:	Sheila Piriano	283-4655

EXCITING UPCOMING EVENTS

- Oct. 1 - Oct. 31** Flanders Mansion In Carmel Open for Tours
- Oct. 9** Open house Celebrating the Way Side Inn's 100th Anniversary
- Nov. 15** Board Meeting (**members welcome** - contact Ollie Hamlin at 284-1446)
- May 9** Annual Potluck Dinner

Editor For The Year

As a senior English major at St. Mary's College in Moraga, I am extremely excited about being editor for the Lafayette Historical Society's Newsletter! My name is Jane Spangler and I was born and raised in Nicolaus, a small farming community just north of Sacramento, where my great grandfather Lyle Spangler bought a small parcel of land near the beginning of the Sacramento River, and began farming. The land which he originally purchased is now the center of a family business, continued through the generations, which utilizes almost three-thousand acres of land to produce a variety of crops including rice, wheat, corn, alfalfa, and sugarbeets.

Because Nicolaus is a farming community, its schools are pretty small. I started kindergarten at the tender age of four, at a grammar school with roughly one hundred students ranging from kindergarten through eighth grades. Also, I began high school at the age of twelve, with forty other students in my class whose faces were only too familiar. Basically my high school had about two-hundred students on a good day!

A common question people ask me is, why am I a senior in college at the age of nineteen? I usually respond by telling them that I started kindergarten at the age of four and skipped eighth grade, giving me a head start on high school as well as college. Skipping eighth grade was not an easy choice, but certainly one I will never regret.

As my personal history has defined who I am, in the same fashion, the history and people of this land have shaped and developed the city which we now call Lafayette. I would truly appreciate any information that you might have regarding the history of Lafayette and its people.

- * If you see a star on your mailing label, please pay your dues. For more information regarding your dues please refer to the enclosed Membership Application and Renewal Form or call Ollie Hamlin at 284-1446.

President's Message

President Marechal Duncan invites all Lafayette Historical Society members, plus family and friends, to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Way Side Inn (next to the Park Theater). The party will be at Plaza Park from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, October 9th. L.H.S. membership cards, with an old photo of the Way Side Inn, have been signed by Marechal and attached to each member's copy of the current newsletter.

OCT. ONLY OPENING OF OPULENT CARMEL ESTATE

by Diddo Clark

When I was growing up in Lafayette, my family visited Aunt Grace's house in Carmel about once a year. My brothers and I would dash to our favorite place - the ping pong room. We liked the frescos of early California history on the walls and ceiling. We loved batting ping pong balls. We'd whoop and holler whenever a rally lasted long enough for one of us to hit the ball more than once.

My great uncle Paul Flanders, 1890-1944, served as a naval officer during World War I and II. Between wars, his primary occupation was real estate developer. He was also a venture capitalist who financed the invention of the first kind of rivet which could be installed without anyone on the other end. This new rivet made possible the mass production of metal airplanes during World War II.

Grace Johnson Flanders, 1891-1967, was the aunt of Lafayette's own Johnson Clark. She spent much of her time reading scholarly books, playing bridge, making money in the stock market, and giving it to charities.

In the early 1920s, Paul and Grace built a Tudor Revival mansion on 17 acres of Carmel hillside overlooking Carmel Bay and the Carmel Mission. Their son Barry had died at age 11 in 1933 so, after Grace died, the property was sold to the City of Carmel. The City leased the estate to the Carmel Heritage Society which couldn't afford to maintain it. Now, it is being transformed into a "Romantic Restoration" by more than 30 distinguished California interior and landscape designers. The Flanders mansion will be open to the public in October as the 1994 Monterey Peninsula Designers showcase. The event is a benefit for the Alliance on Aging, Inc. of Monterey County. Oct. 1-31, Wednesday through Sunday (closed Mondays and

Tuesdays), 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., General Admission: \$15; Seniors: \$12. No advance reservations needed, except for group tours of 15 or more. For information and advance ticket purchase, call (408) 655-1334. Lunch served from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

- ◆ If you are willing to lend a hand in putting on a house tour for 1995, or if you have information regarding a house or homes which are available for tours contact:

Diddo Clark - 906-0966

SPECIAL NOTES

From Our Outgoing President, Bill Wakeman

- Collete Means has retired as chairperson of the Walking Tours Program. Actually she wanted to leave last year, but the school board changed the local history classes from fourth grade to third; resulting in twice as many classes as the previous years. She felt it would be too much for a new person to handle so she stuck it out for another year. **Thanks Collete! You will be sorely missed but with your schedule you should be excused.**
- Chairperson Landmarks Committee - Now that we know locations for historic sites such as Bernal's Adobe house and Nathaniel Jones' Locust Tree Farm, it might be a good idea to mark them. Also we should join with the Orinda Historical Society in locating and marking the four corners of Rancho Acalanes. They have located and marked the northwest corner and are in process of doing the same for the southwest corner.
- Program - We have been lucky in that we have found speakers for the Annual Potluck Dinners and this year's fall program. But we should have trips to some historical site. In the past we have had some good ones.

L.H.S. Newsletter staff:

Editor for the Year: Jane Spangler - 472-0158

Assistant Editor: Diddo Clark - 906-0966

Please write to: Letters-to-the-Editor
1465 Sunset Loop
Lafayette, CA 94549

Josiah and Clarence Allen: Josiah Allen and his son, Clarence, in their horse-drawn gig in front of the hotel on Mt. Diablo Boulevard in the 1880s (at the site of the present-day World Savings building). Clarence died in a deer hunting accident in 1890.



From the LHS Archives...

Sumner Hodges wrote LHS in 1971:

I was born in Walnut Creek, May 16, 1885. Father was the son of Samuel Hodges, who settled on Reliez Creek and Old Tunnel Road in 1848, having crossed the plains several times.

Mother was a Donner whose parents came to California via the Ismus and boat. Mother was born at sea, the Gulf of Mexico.

Father and Mother gave up their livery stable and moved to his father's ranch. So I went to the Lafayette School, graduating in 1900. Went to Berkeley High. After graduating in 1904, I worked for a firm in San Francisco until the depression in 1908.

In 1909 Katie Mae Barnes and I were married. Our interest in the Lafayette community was inherent. We finally moved here in 1950 to live on fifty acres of land. The deed had been in Hodges hands almost one hundred years.



Sumner Hodges and Katie Mae Barnes on their wedding day, June 6th, 1909 in Berkeley. The dress was donated to the Society by Mr. Hodges in 1971, and depicts the work and styles of that period.

ODE TO ARCHIVERY

It seems the key to survival
In matters most archival
Is: "Don't shuffle the stuff"--
It's messed up enough.
To provenance there's just no rival.

The first thing that you'll have to say
Is whether or not things should stay.
Should we keep it forever?
(A worthy endeavor)
Or throw the whole boxful away?

An archivist surely must learn.
When to save and then when to burn.
"When in doubt--Pitch it out"
Then don't stand there and pout;
You'll have much more room in return.

The condition of some of our papers
May call for some poisonous vapors
To kill off the mold
And bugs that are bold
Thus preventing their ornery capers.

When the records are properly mended
And placed in file folders unbended
We'll arrange them all neatly
And box them discreetly
And hope that their use not ended.

An archivist's job seems to me
A job as secure as can be
Cause papers keep coming
While government's humming
And the end of the flood we can't see.

* reprinted from the SCA Newsletter